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TO CHORAL, VOCAL, AND GLEE SOCIETIES.



It is a curious part of my long experience to find that after twenty-five years I feel more and more doubtful in deciding what will suit popular taste. The most signal instance of this is, I think, presented by the book I printed a short time since, called *Novello's Part-Song Book*; a work, which has not yet had the sale and success which I expected, and which it deserves, from the expence, labour, and attention bestowed on its production.

The details are something as follows:—I secured a very good editor, Mr. E. G. Monk,—one who took an interest in the work, far beyond the liberal salary that was fixed for his labours, and I may say that it was a labour of love with him. He obtained contributions from some of the first Composers and Poets of the day. Original Poems, by Mrs. Newton Crosland, R. Monkton Milnes, Barry Cornwall, Rev. J. M. Neale, with many published under initials only; these and selections from Shakespeare, Herrick, Horace, &c., were set to music by Sir Henry R. Bishop, Jules Benedict, Mendelssohn, G. A. Macfarren, W. C. Macfarren, Dr. Rimbault, E. G. Monk, Miss Sterling, Dr. Stewart (of Dublin), Finlay Dun (of Edinburgh), Bianchi Taylor, Dr. C. W. Corfe, &c.; many of whom appear to have been particularly happy in their compositions.

There were given seven prizes, of eight guineas each, offered for original Part-Songs; and the selection was made from above 200 competitors: Mr. E. G. Monk (the editor), Mr. John Hullah, and Mr. Edward Holmes, acting as umpires.

The subjects of the Part-Songs are especially addressed to National and Patriotic feelings. Of the *thirty-six* pieces contained in the volume, *twenty* have been written expressly for the work; the remaining *sixteen* are English and German Part-Songs, the majority of which have never before been printed in their present form.

In publishing this carefully collected material, I applied my printing experience to produce it in the two most convenient forms, viz.: I. A handsome quarto vocal score, of the thirty-six Part-Songs, printed in large type (with condensed accompaniment for practice), handsomely bound, sells for 12s. (or 4d. apiece, cheap enough, one would think); and II. The four separate Vocal Parts, printed in large type, but neat 8vo. sized books, sell at 1s. 6d. per part, for all the thirty-six compositions. The Part-Song Book is also sold sub-divided into twelve portions, both score and parts (viz.: 1s. for score, and 1½d. for vocal part) for the convenience of those who do not want to buy the whole.

Now, what I have to ask is, that my good friends in the Societies to whom this is addressed will consider what I have left undone,—what they would advise me still to do,—or what change (if any) they would propose in the *PART-SONG BOOK*, to make so valuable a collection of carefully selected new part-songs a useful contribution to the vocal societies of the day.

Communications addressed to their faithful servant,

J. ALFRED NOVELLO,

will be thankfully received.

69, Dean Street, Soho, }
35, Poultry, } October, 1855.

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